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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**February's First Friday opening of five new shows
at Ocean City Center for the Arts
is free and open to the public**

OCEAN CITY, MD — Jan. 23, 2017 — The public is invited to a free, opening reception of five new art shows on First Friday, Feb. 3 from 5 – 7 p.m. at the Ocean City Center for the Arts, 94th St. bayside. Hooked Restaurant will be serving complementary hors d'oeuvres.

Hanging in the Thaler Gallery, “Home” is the theme of the group show by members of the Art League of Ocean City. The artists will interpret what home means to them in both 2D and 3D media. Eastern Shore artist Leslie Belloso will judge the show and award cash prizes.

The Galleria will be filled with original works of art from the co-operative Artists' Gallery of Ellicott City, Md. Fourteen artists working at various media — acrylics, oils, watercolor, printmaking, ink, stained glass, and photography— will bring their work across the bridge to Ocean City. All are members of the co-op gallery, which formed in 1995 and recently opened in a new Ellicott City location.

Up-and-coming painter Reeves Dark of Ocean City occupies Studio E in February. A representational artist working mostly in oils, Dark is currently a student at Salisbury University where he is working towards his BFA in graphic design. His work is inspired by his experiences while surfing and by the natural beauty of the area.

The batik work of Betsy Hall Harrison occupies the Spotlight Galley during February. Born in Baltimore and a childhood student at the Maryland Institute of Art, she studied art in Mexico and Idaho before moving to Ocean City in 1980. An accomplished batik artist working on silk, Harrison is a long-time member of the Art League of Ocean City.

Local jeweler Rae Smith shows her work in the Artisan Showcase during February. She creates one-of-a-kind pieces that incorporate sterling silver and copper and are inspired by rustic textures with natural influences.

The Ocean City Center for the Arts at 502 94th Street is the home of the Art League of Ocean City, a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting the visual arts in the Ocean City area through education, exhibits, scholarships, programs and community art events.

Financial support comes primarily through membership dues from individuals and corporate sponsors. Funding for exhibits is also provided by the Community Foundation of the Eastern Shore, the Worcester County Arts Council, Maryland State Arts Council and the National Endowment for the Arts, organizations dedicated to cultivating a vibrant cultural community where the arts thrive.

More information is available at 410-524-9433 or www.artleagueofoceancity.org.

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EDITORS: Photo attached.

SU student Reeves Dark of Ocean City will display his paintings at the Ocean City Center for the Arts during February.

